

Appl. No. 10/028,014
Amdt. Dated September 16, 2004
Reply to Office action of June 23, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-15 are pending in the present application.

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed June 23, 2004. In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claim 14, rejected claims 1-12 under 35 U.S.C. §112; claims 1, 3, 18, 13, and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). In addition, the Examiner indicated allowable subject matter for claims 5-7 and claims 2, 4, 9-12 and 14. Applicant has canceled claims 1, 8, and 14, and amended claims 2-7, 9-13, and 15. Applicant would like to preserve the right to continue prosecuting the canceled claims in the future. Reconsideration in light of the amendments and remarks made herein is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

1. In the Office Action, the Examiner objected claim 14 because of a minor informality. Applicant has amended claim 14 to correct such minor informality. Applicant respectfully request the claim objection be withdrawn.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

2. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-12 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being allegedly indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant has amended claims 2-7, 9-13, and 15 to clarify the claim language.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112 be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter. The Office Action objects to claims 5-7 as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but indicates that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

5. The Office Action further indicates that claims 2, 4, 9-12, and 14 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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Applicant has amended dependent claims 2, 9, and 14 to include limitations of the respective independent claims 1, 8, and 13. Applicant respectfully requests that newly amended independent claims 2, 9, and 14 and all claims that depend therefrom be allowed.

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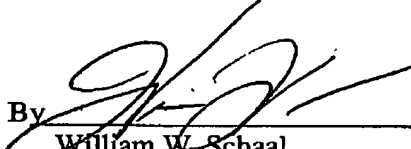
Conclusion

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

Dated: September 16, 2004

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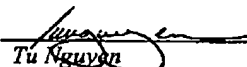
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